



main building for the marquees, trade stands and more than adequate camping – in fact, the rally was almost out of sight of the road, as I found out when I nearly shot straight past it. Colin, the landlord, had gone out of his way to make the rally at home, sponsoring the large marquee, the stage and all the flooring – proper wooden stuff with even a couple of carpets! – and which was very welcome, given that the ground was a little damp outside. It was a very generous gesture and people seemed to show their appreciation by spending all their pocket money at the bar, so everyone was happy. I doubt that many people had been to a pub-based rally where, on Sunday, the landlord personally thanked everyone for coming. Presumably, he'd forgotten about my mates, Minxy, Fran and Sam, raucously trying to drink his pub out of, well, everything, the night before.

Although there'd been a few drops of rain on Friday, Saturday was, for the most part, dry if grumpily cloudy, and, fortunately, reasonably still. That appeared to be the only disadvantage of this site; in this part of the world, when the wind blows, it really blows, straight off the North Sea with nothing to stop it until it reaches Northamptonshire. There was obviously a reason for the massive wind turbines just down the road.

The Brit Chopper tent seemed well tethered, so I wandered in to say hello. This had absolutely nothing to do with mutual professional respect or gentlemanly conduct and everything to do with the fact that they had a kettle. And biscuits.

Two teas later – in a proper mug, too, they're dead posh at BC – I struck out for the camp site. Creature had shoved a sheet in my hand and asked me to do some judging, which, to my horror, involved walking about, there not being a formal bike show. Now, there was plenty of space for camping, so what was it that made some people want to pitch their tents at the very farthest look-look-you-can-just-about-see-it-if-you-squint end of the field? Did they really dislike other people so much? (And if so, why were they at a rally in the first place?) Did they need the exercise? Were they actually aiming for an event five miles down the road? Trust me, if a rally has an 'on the field' custom show and one of the judges is a black-haired, really nasty piece of work, the further away you park up, the more distant your chances of winning something will be. It's the law of diminishing returns. And short legs.

Creature had enlisted several judges of differing opinions, but everyone appeared to agree on the choices for Best of Show and Best Paint, and Stevie

